

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 /058 W
-----112037Z 022276 /45
R 111901Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2706

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FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT PARIS DATED 6 MAY 1977 FROM
BORDEAUX REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO:

QUOTE
BORDEAUX 096
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FR
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FORMER PREMIER JACQUES CHABAN-
DELMAS MAY 6.

1. I MET ALONE WITH MR. CHABAN-DELMAS FOR 25 MINUTES AT
THE BORDEAUX CITY HALL ON MAY 6. AFTER BRIEF INITIAL
COURTESIES AND A WELL-PRACTICED STATEMENT BY CHABAN
CONCERNING THE DEPTH OF FRANCO-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP AND
MUTUAL INTEREST, HE WAS WILLING TO DEVOTE THE BULK OF
THE MEETING TO AN EXPOSITION OF HIS VIEWS ON FRENCH
NATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES. MAJOR POINTS COVERED WERE
THESE:

2. THE RPR MUST LOWER ITS TONE IN CRITICISM OF THE GOV-
ERNMENT. THE SHARP RPR INTERVENTION IN THE ASSEMBLY DE-
BATE LAST WEEK WAS NOT CONSONANT WITH THE DECISION
WHICH HAD BEEN TAKEN WITHIN THE COUNCILS OF THE RPR EAR-
LIER (CHABAN SAID SO ON EUROPE 1 THE FOLLOWING DAY AND
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WILL SPEAK OUT EVEN MORE STRONGLY IN THE FUTURE IF THIS
CONTINUES).

3. THE RPR (AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MAJORITY) MUST
ACHIEVE A DEGREE OF UNITY -- OR ALL IS LOST. THERE IS
A BASIC CONTRADICTION IN THOSE WHO CALL FOR A STRONG
FIGHT AGAINST THE LEFT AND AT THE SAME TIME SHATTER

THE MAJORITY, THE UNITY OF WHICH OFFERS THE ONLY HOPE
OF KEEPING THE LEFT FROM VICTORY.

4. THE MAJORITY NEEDS TO ESTABLISH AN AGREED PROGRAM
(SUCH AS CHABAN'S "NEW SOCIETY") WITH WHICH TO BATTLE
THE LEFT -- "YOU CAN'T FIGHT SOMETHING WITH NOTHING".

5. THE RPR (AND OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MAJORITY) SHOULD
SUPPORT THE BARRE II PROPOSALS. THEIR DISAGREEMENTS WITH
THEM ARE RELATIVELY MINOR AND, AFTER ALL, THE BARRE II
GOVERNMENT HAS RECEIVED A MAJORITY VOTE IN THE ASSEMBLY.

6. BARRE WILL BE VERY CAREFUL TO PRESENT PROPOSALS TO
THE ASSEMBLY IN A FORM IN WHICH THEY CAN ONLY BE DEFEA-
TED BY CENSURE OF THE GOVERNMENT. THIS PLACES ASSEMBLY
MEMBERS ON GUARD BECAUSE THEY KNOW THAT THIS GOVERNMENT
WILL BE THE LAST ONE OF THIS LEGISLATURE. BRINGING DOWN
THE GOVERNMENT WILL MEAN DISSOLUTION AND NEW ELECTIONS.

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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7. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A PROPITIOUS MOMENT FOR EARLY
LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS COULD ARISE IN OCTOBER BECAUSE:
-- THE ECONOMY IS LIKELY TO BE GOING BETTER BY
THEN -- LESS INFLATION, LESS UNEMPLOYMENT, ETC. -- PRO-
VIDED THAT THE MAJORITY HAS UNIFIED ITSELF AND ESTABLI-
SHED A PLATFORM BY THAT TIME.

8. GISCARD WILL BE VERY WARY ABOUT DISSOLVING THE PARLIAMENT HIMSELF, FOR, EVEN IF THINGS SHOULD LOOK GOOD FOR THE MAJORITY IN OCTOBER, HE MUST ALWAYS CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE LEFT WILL WIN AND IF HE HAS DISSOLVED PARLIAMENT HE CANNOT DO SO AGAIN FOR A YEAR. HOWEVER, IF THE PARLIAMENT VOTES TO DISSOLVE ITSELF, THE PRESIDENT IS SUBJECT TO NO SUCH RESTRICTION.

9. CHABAN SAID HE HAD HELD HIMSELF ALOOF FROM ENTRY INTO THE CURRENT BARRE GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO PLAY A ROLE "IN THE SHADOWS" IN BRINGING GISCARD, BARRE AND CHIRAC TOWARD A UNIFIED POSITION.

10. DURING OUR DISCUSSION CHABAN SPOKE QUIETLY AND SER-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IOUSLY, CHOOSING HIS WORDS CAREFULLY. HE WAS NOT CRITICAL OF GISCARD OR BARRE BUT EXPRESSED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR PROBLEMS AND A DESIRE TO HELP. AT MOST, HE FELT THEY SHOULD BE DOING MORE TO DEVELOP A PROGRAM WHICH COULD ATTRACT POPULAR SUPPORT. HIS IMPLIED CRITICISM OF CHIRAC AND HIS LIEUTENANTS WAS STRONG, THOUGH HE DID NOT CRITICIZE CHIRAC BY NAME. CHABAN SEEMED TO BELIEVE THAT HE COULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN UNIFYING THE MAJORITY. IN ANY CASE HE EXPRESSED HIS DETERMINATION TO GIVE IT A GOOD TRY.
MARVIN END QUOTE
GAMMON

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Message Attributes

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